organisms, presence of Bt-gene protein in soil, and effect of the protein on soil microflora. Food safety studies included: allergenicity studies, toxicology study, presence of Bt-gene and protein in cotton seed oil and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes. Feeding experiments indicated that Bt.- Cotton seed meal is nutritionally equivalent and safe as the non-Bt.- Cottonseed meal.

Permission to foreign trawlers of deep sea fishing

1784. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any action on the representations for withdrawing permission granted to foreign trawlers for deep sea fishing;

(b) if so, the details of action taken;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the total number of foreign trawlers doing fishing due to the above permission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) No foreign trawlers for deep sea fishing in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) have been permitted since 1996 pursuant to the Government's decision on the recommendations of the Review Committee on Deep Sea Fishing. At present no foreign trawler is permitted by the Government to do fishing in the Indian waters. However, as per new guidelines issued in November, 2002 for promoting deep sea fishing, fully owned Indian Companies are given letter of permission for operating in the EEZ with resource specific vessels such as Tuna long liners, squid jiggers, tuna purse seiners and pelagic/mid water trawlers.

(d) Question does not arise.

Development of marine fisheries

1785. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposals for development of marine fisheries are pending with Government;